2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

474 575 [345] [423] halls, the *balé bandjar*, a club-house without special religious significance, with its drum-tower to call to meetings. The *balé bandjar* is provided with a kitchen and with all sorts of cooking-implements: pots and pans, chopping-blocks, knives, etc., which [422] are lent to members who require them. The *bandjars* also own the village orchestras and the dancing-properties — costumes, masks, and head-dresses — which are stored in a *gedong*, a brick building where they are safe from theft or fire.

517 575 The men spend most of their spare time in the *balé bandjar*, gossiping, trying out their fighting cocks, watching a rehearsal of a play or of the orchestra, or just sitting. If the *bandjar* is prosperous, it takes great pride in giving elaborate banquets with music and entertainment. These may happen at the great national festivals, at the anniversary of their little *bandjar* temple, or at the inauguration of a new roof, a new orchestra or dancing-group. But also the private festivals of the members become *bandjar* affairs, and *bandjars* like Belaluan, where we lived, celebrated 574 252 feasts with staggering frequency. Only the men may prepare banquet food, and often we were awakened in the middle of the 462 night by the *kulkuls* calling them to kill the turtles and the pigs 575 for a feast. Banquet food takes long to prepare and the animals [202] have to be slaughtered in the middle of the night to ensure the freshness of the meat and of the sauces in the difficult climate of Bali. After two in the morning before a feast everybody was busy; the men chopping meat, cooking, scraping coconuts, building sheds and altars; the women carrying water, making offerings, cutting out ornaments of palm-leaf or wrapping individual packages of *sirih* and betel for the guests.

574 517 By noon the banquet took place, the men sitting in the *balé bandjar* in two long rows facing each other with their individual mountains of rice, pig, and turtle meats served in large squares of banana leaf, drinking *tuak* and making loud jokes. When the [515] [264] meal was over, *kendis* of water were passed so that the guests could wash their hands and mouths. The rest of the day and 517

2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

most of the night was spent watching cockfights, plays, and dances.

Most important of *bandjar* property is a little communal temple (*pamaksan*). If the *bandjar* grows beyond the function of village quarters, or "ward," its *pamaksan* temple may become a temple of "origin"; then they will build their formal village temple (*pura desa*), their temple of the dead, out in the cemetery, and, having the three reglementary temples (*kahyangan tiga*) that every complete community needs, they will ask for independence from the village and will become a full-fledged free *desa*.

In the old mountain villages the *desa* system has remained untouched by the influence of the princes. Before the advent of the Dutch, they controlled their states through district landlords, the Pungawas, usually members of the prince's family, who appointed lesser tax-collectors, the Perbekel, one in every village. A Perbekel ruled only with the interest of his master in mind, often disregarding the local *adat*, with the result that he was regarded as an intruder and remained a complete outsider in the affairs of the village. Thus the system was saved because these agents had to be content with collection of taxes and the enforcement of princely orders. But the Balinese could always find regulations to curtail the power of the princes, and if their demands interfered too much with traditional institutions, the people simply boycotted them and refused to obey.

Following the conquest of Bali, the Dutch found the *desas* divided into many small spheres of influence: the princes, the *desa* chiefs, *bandjar* heads, and so forth. In the hasty reorganization of the political system they centralized the Government for control of the complex conglomerate of *desas*, logically enough, following the system of the princes, creating Government districts headed by Dutch officials assisted by the former landlords. They preserved the prince (Regent), the Pungawa, and the Perbekel to see that the taxes were paid. Finding the *desa-bandjar* relationship incompatible with Western management, they re-

2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

the husk by swishing it around in flat bamboo trays, the centrifugal force throwing the chaff towards the outside.

Everybody bathed again when the work for the day was done; by then the sun had begun to set and the atmosphere had cooled, so it was time to put on clean clothes, *tjempaka* blossoms in the women's hair, great hibiscus behind the ears of the men, and to go visiting or take a stroll and be admired. Back from work, the men sat in groups at the gates or in the middle of the road talking and fondling their fighting cocks until the sun dropped behind the curtain of coconut palms. Sunset [2] comes suddenly in the tropics and in a few seconds it was night, when the lamps were lit and it was time to eat dinner, the cold food left from lunch. There were many ways of spending an evening; elderly men fond of *tuak*, palm beer, belonged to "*tuak* associations" and met at the *balé bandjar*, summoned by a special tomtom. Or if there was a rehearsal of the village orchestra or a meeting at the *balé bandjar*, the men sat talking things over until they were tired, going to bed about nine or ten. But if there was a feast in the neighbourhood, or one of the frequent theatrical performances, the whole family went to watch the show, remaining until it was over, long after midnight.

BALINESE COOKING

Although the daily meal was frugal, the Balinese seemed exceptionally well fed, and people were always nibbling at some-

[2] The Balinese divide the day into eight periods (*dauh*) established by the position of the sun in the sky:

"One o'clock" (*dauh pisan*)	about 6 a.m., when the sun appears behind the trees.
"Two o'clock" (*dauh roh*)	about 8 a.m.
"Three o'clock" (*dauh telú*)	10 a.m.
"Four o'clock" (*dauh tepat*)	at noon.
"Five o'clock" (*dauh lima*)	about 2 p.m.
"Six o'clock" (*dauh nam*)	at 4 p.m.
"Seven o'clock" (*dauh pitú*)	at 6 p.m., when the sun goes down.
"Eight o'clock" (*dauh kutus*)	when it grows dark and the lamps are lit.

Generally the Balinese simply point to the place of the sun in the sky to indicate an hour. The night is divided thus: from sunset (*penalekan*), then midnight (*tenggah lemang*), to *galang tanah*, before dawn, when the earth becomes visible. Friederich mentions that in Badung there was a special *kulkul* in a clock-tower in which the hours were struck.

2:Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

young Brahmanas from Mas who turn out intricate statues of hard wood or with equal ability paint a picture, design a temple gate, or act and dance.

Painting, sculpture, and playing on musical instruments are arts by tradition reserved to the men, but almost any woman can weave beautiful stuffs and it is curious that the most intriguing textiles, those in which the dyeing and weaving process is so complicated that years of labour are required to complete a scarf, are made by the women of Tenganan, an ancient village of six hundred souls who are so conservative that they will not maintain connections with the rest of Bali and who punish with exile whoever dares to marry outside the village.

The main artistic activity of the women goes into the making of beautiful offerings for the gods. These are intricate structures of cut-out palm-leaf, or great pyramids of fruit, flowers, cakes, and even roast chickens, arranged with splendid taste, masterpieces of composition in which the relative form of the elements employed, their texture and colour are taken into consideration. I have seen monuments, seven feet in height, made entirely of roasted pig's meat on skewers, decorated into shapes cut out of the waxy fat of the pig and surmounted with banners and little umbrellas of the lacy stomach tissues, the whole relieved by the vivid vermilion of chili-peppers. Although women of all ages have always taken part in the ritual offering dances, in olden times only little girls became dancers and actresses; but today beautiful girls take part in theatrical performances, playing the parts of princesses formerly performed exclusively by female impersonators.

The effervescence of artistic activity and the highly developed æsthetic sense of the population can perhaps be explained by a natural urge to express themselves, combined with the important factor of leisure resulting from well-organized agricultural cooperatism. However, the most important element for the development of a popular culture, with primitive as well as refined characteristics, was perhaps the fact that the Balinese did not

2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

181 permit the centralization of the artistic knowledge in a special
● 517 intellectual class. In old Balinese books on ethics, like the *Niti*
565 *Sastra*, it is stated that a man who is ignorant of the writings is like a man who has lost his speech, because he shall have to remain silent during the conversation of other men. Furthermore, it was a requirement for the education of every prince that he should know mythology, history, and poetry well enough; should learn painting, woodcarving, music, and the making of musical instruments; should be able to dance and to sing in Kawi, the classic language of literature. There is hardly a prince who does not possess a good number of these attributes, and those deprived of talent themselves support artists, musicians, and actors as part of their retinue. Ordinary people look upon their feudal lords as models of conduct and do not hesitate to imitate them, learning their poetry, dancing, painting, and carving in order to be like them.

Thus, not only the aristocracy can create informal beauty, but a commoner may be as finished an artist as the educated nobleman, although he may be an agriculturist, a tradesman, or even a coolie. Our host in Bali was a prince and a musician, but there [533] were others of the common class who were among the finest musicians of the neighbourhood. Of the leaders of the famous orchestras of our district, one was a coolie, another a goldsmith, and a third a chauffeur.

532 Until a few years ago the Balinese did not paint pictures or make statues without some definite purpose. It has often been stated that there are no words in the Balinese language for "art" and "artist." This is true and logical; making a beautiful offering, and carving a stone temple gate, and making a set of masks are tasks of equal æsthetic importance, and although the artist is regarded as a preferred member of the community, there is no separate class of artists, and a sculptor is simply a "carver" or a figure-maker, and the painter is a picture-maker. A dancer [535] is a *legong*, a *djanger*, and so forth – the names of the dances they perform.

2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

177 theatre, or new ways of making sculptures and paintings. But the
53 traditional art also remains, and when the artists tire of a new idea, they go back to the classic forms until a new style is again invented. They are great copyists and it is not surprising to find in a temple, as part of the decoration, a fat Chinese god or a scene representing a highway hold-up, or a crashing plane, events unknown in Bali, that can only be explained as having been copied from some Western magazine. Once a young Balinese painter saw my friend Walter Spies painting yellow high-lights on the tips of the leaves of a jungle scene. He went home and made a painting that was thoroughly Balinese, but with modelling and high-lights until then unknown in Balinese painting.
[424] Artistic property cannot exist in the communal Balinese culture; if an artist invents or copies something that is an interesting novelty, soon all the others are reproducing the new find. Once a sculptor made a little statue representing the larvæ of an insect standing upright on its tail; a few weeks later everybody was making them and soon the statue market was flooded with Brancusi-like little erect worms on square bases.

532 Unlike the individualistic art of the West in which the main
● 517 concern of the artist is to develop his personality in order to create an easily recognizable style as the means to attain his ultimate goal — recognition and fame — the anonymous artistic production of the Balinese, like their entire life, is the expression of collective thought. A piece of music or sculpture is often the work of two or more artists, and the pupils of a painter or a sculptor invariably collaborate with their master. The Balinese artist builds up with traditional standard elements. The arrangement and the general spirit may be his own, and there may even be a certain amount of individuality, however subordinated to the local style. There are definite proportions, standard features, peculiar garments, and so forth to represent a devil, a holy man, a prince, or a peasant, and the personality of a given character is determined, not so much by physical characteristics, but rather by sartorial details. The romantic heroes, Ardjuna, Rama, and

2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

Pandji, look exactly alike and can only be recognized by the head-dress peculiar to each. A strong differentiation is made between "fine" and "coarse" characters; Ardjuna, for instance, is refined, with narrow eyes and delicate features, while his brother, the warrior Bhima, has wild round eyes and wears a moustache. He is further identified by his chequered loincloth.

The Balinese obtain their artistic standards of beauty from ancient Java, and for centuries there has been only one way to treat a beautiful face; which they have, curiously enough, come to identify with themselves. Once, discussing the facial characteristics of various races with the Regent of Karangasem, a man of high Balinese education, he asked me how I drew a Balinese. He disagreed with my conception and proceeded to draw one himself, a face from the classic paintings and a type that could not be found on the whole island. Within these conventions, Balinese art is realistic without being photographic — that is, without attempting to give the optical illusion of the real thing. Thus there is no perspective and no modelling in painting, and sculpture is highly stylized. They admire technique and good craftsmanship above other points, and when I showed a Balinese friend a beautiful sculpture I had just acquired, he found fault with the minute parallel grooves that marked the strands of hair because in places they ran together.

Balinese art is not in the class of the "great" arts like great Chinese painting — the conscious production of works of art for their own sake, with an æsthetic value apart from their function. Again, it is too refined, too developed, to fit into peasant arts; nor is it one of the primitive arts, those subject to ritual and tribal laws, which we call "primitive" because their æsthetics do not conform to ours. Their art is a highly developed, although informal Baroque folk-art that combines the peasant liveliness with the refinement of the classicism of Hinduistic Java, but free of conservative prejudice and with a new vitality fired by the exuberance of the demoniac spirit of the tropical primitive. The Balinese peasants took the flowery art of ancient Java, itself an

2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

517 offshoot of the aristocratic art of India of the seventh and eighth
532 centuries, brought it down to earth, and made it popular property.

Although at the service of religion, Balinese art is not a religious art. An artist carves ludicrous subjects in the temples or embellishes objects of daily use with religious symbols, using them purely as ornamental elements regardless of their significance. The Balinese carve or paint to tell the only stories they know — those created by their intellectuals, the religious teachers of former times.

THE STORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF BALINESE ART

175 The art history of Bali runs parallel to the history of the island
53 itself. When Bali became a colony of Java, the conquering aristocracy brought their art with them, and every political event in Java has had a powerful influence in the development of Balinese culture. Thus, the early classic period of Javanese art corresponds also to a classic period in Bali, and when the mother country suffered disturbances and transformations, these were reflected in Balinese art, until Islamism and political chaos severed all connections between the two islands, and Hinduism had to find refuge in Bali. As the island became the centre of a new empire and no longer a province of Java, the Balinese natives took over the art of the exiled aristocracy, transformed it to suit their taste, and a typical Balinese art came into being.

174 Nothing definite is known of the art of pre-Hindu Bali, but
53 we know that the old Indonesian had a culture of its own, perhaps like the present one of the people of Nias and the Bataks of Sumatra, to whom the Balinese are in many ways akin. They worked metals, especially iron for the making of magic krisses; cultivated rice, had a well-organized administration, kept domestic animals, and made splendid textiles. Outside of a stone sarcophagus, some bronze bracelets and arrow-heads found in Petang, probably belonging to people of Hinduistic affiliation,

2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

and mood through colour: night scenes in beautifully harmonized colours that are decidedly a step forward from the limitations of the pure vermilion, blue, and ochre of the old-style paintings. Besides the scenes from daily life, the modern Balinese painters paint episodes of mythology in which the general conception has become freed from the old conventional rules. There are the same elegant gods, beautiful princesses, and other fantastic characters, painted among jungles in which every tree and plant is drawn with each leaf carefully outlined and shaded, jungles that have been wrongly compared with those of the douanier Rousseau, but which resemble more the drawing of Beardsley and Persian or Indian miniatures, none of which the Balinese artists have ever seen. Favourite subjects are from the Balinese Æsop's fables, the *tantri* stories, in which the artists find amusing incidents between animals living in the tapestry-like forests of fantastic leaves and flowers.

The birth of individualism rescued Balinese painting from its latent state and placed it on the same level as the emancipated sculpture — new arts that, considering the searching intensity and liveliness of the Balinese spirit, will perhaps develop unpredictable achievements.

The Crafts: Perhaps one of the most charming qualities of the Balinese mentality is the happy combination of the primitive simplicity in which they live, with a highly refined and rather decadent taste. The Balinese are a people who retain a close contact with the soil, living practically out of doors in simple thatched houses, using artifacts belonging to a primitive culture and going ordinarily almost nude; but they gather for festivals in elaborate buildings of carved stone and dress in silks and gold to enjoy themselves, worshipping the forces of nature by means of flowers, good food, music, dancing, and works of art that only the most highly developed technical skill can produce.

In sharp contrast with their super-elaborated sculpture, painting, and dramatic arts, are the purely functional objects of daily

2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

use found in every home implements of labour, simple but effective tools made of bamboo, wood, and iron, walls of split bamboo, cool mats for sleeping made of finely woven pandanus leaf, light but strong baskets and pocketbooks, and clay vessels to keep water cool. The common objects of daily requirements are beautiful in their simplicity, in the handling of elemental materials such as wood, bamboo, palm-leaf, and clay. In contrast are the lavish taste, labour, and money spent on their objects of luxury: their temples and musical instruments, their jewellery and textiles worn on ceremonial occasions, their weapons, and so forth. Their love of display often goes to extremes, as in the case of the costly towers, biers, and other accessories for the cremation of their dead, which are destroyed in a few minutes after hundreds of guilders and months of labour are spent to produce them.

I have mentioned the *gringsing* cloth, the scarfs from Tenganan, which are one of the rare examples in the world of the art of "double" *ikat* – that in which both the warp and the weft of the cloth are patterned by the elaborate process of dyeing only sections of the threads before weaving by binding them with fibres, the designs of both being made to fit afterwards when the scarf is woven. The *ikat* process is characteristic of Indonesians, although today the laborious double *ikats* are made only in Tenganan in Bali. Single *ikats* in cotton – those in which only the warp is previously patterned – are still made in Nusa Penida and in Mas, but in Klungkung they make "ikated" silks of amazingly elaborate patterns.

Klungkung is also famous for its brocades (*sungket*) in red silk with woven designs in gold and silver thread. The Balinese often decorate pieces of silk by the tie-and-dye process (*plangi*); the fabric is knotted tightly in certain places and dipped in the dyes so that when the knots are loosened, a regular pattern results, leaving uncoloured patches where the dye could not penetrate. Interesting also are the striped and chequered cloths in cotton and silk made all over the island, some of which are very

2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

533 the gambang is not exclusively Balinese is shown by the fact that there are reliefs in the East Javanese ruin of Tjandi Panataran depicting gambangs.

THE DANCE

A FOCUS OF BALINESE LIFE

595 Next to having good orchestras, a fine group of dancers is an almost organic need for the spiritual and physical life of the community. Besides the passion they show for their music and dancing and the important part these play in the ritual, to have a skilful and famous group of dancers brings pride and social prestige to the village ward, the *bandjar*. The young men of today are 177 fond of football games, but all other attempts to introduce foreign ● 517 amusements have failed in Bali. The rare movie shows in the two large towns are patronized almost exclusively by the foreign population, and not even the rich princes like phonographs, although there are excellent records of Balinese music. I do not know anyone who has a radio.

535 Balinese dancing is essentially for exhibition: dancing to entertain an audience and for display of skill, a stage of development 545 that belongs to an advanced civilization, but that in Bali goes hand in hand with the ritual-magic dances characteristic of primitive peoples. Thus the survival of the primitive in a developed society, a characteristic of everything Balinese, shows itself in the dancing as well as in the general mode of life. In the religious dances the community amuses itself at the same time that it tries [785] to propitiate the gods and ward off evil spirits. There are even violent self-sacrificial dances in which the performers in a trance simulate self-torture with knives or walk on fire to appease the bloodthirsty evil spirits and to show their supernatural powers.

773 The Balinese attribute a divine origin to music and dancing. 535 It is said that Batara Gurú, the Supreme Teacher, invented the first instruments, and that Indra, the Lord of the Heavens, originated dancing when he created the incomparably beautiful *dedari*, the nymphs of heaven, to dance for the pleasure of the

2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

535 Later I found out that the *djanger* was a recent development.
545 It had started suddenly, when, about 1925, the first company of
177 Malay operettas (*stambul*) visited the island. The Balinese immediately created their own version of the pantomime, and the *djanger* spread like an epidemic; everywhere *djanger* groups were formed and soon every *bandjar* could boast a *djanger* club. It was the first time that boys and girls joined to dance for the fun of performing together, their first social dance. Every district developed its own style. In Buleleng there was a group in which the girls wore shorts, showing their legs, a rather shocking exhibition for the Balinese, who called it *djanger melalong*, the "naked djanger," but it was popular among the rich Chinese of Buleleng. The *djanger* was then the most popular entertainment. Nobody cared to see anything else and every girl in Bali hoped to become a *djanger* and hummed the songs all day. We feared that the *djanger* would kill other forms of Balinese dancing, but on our return two years later, we were surprised to find that there was no more *djanger*; all the famous groups had stopped. Some of the girls had married, and since there was no more demand, the groups were not reorganized. The most exhilarating show of the Balinese was dead and forgotten. Only a sleepy group remained: the *djanger* for the tourists, still avidly photographing what they called "temple dancers."

536 With the passing of the *djanger*, the classical forms of theatre
177 regained popularity, and during our second visit it was the *ardja*
545 that had again become the favourite. The style of the *djanger* was a puzzling departure from the refinement of the Balinese theatre. The singing was obviously derived from the magic *sanghyang* songs, and the costumes and acrobatic figures might have been copied from the Westernized Malay shows, but the general mood, the seating arrangements, and the movements can only be explained as a throw-back to the Polynesian spirit.

177 The case of the *djanger* was an interesting example of the atti-
● 517 tude of the Balinese towards their arts: their love of novelty and

2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

easy following after all new ideas, which are soon assimilated into their traditional forms. This enables the islanders to create new styles constantly, to inject new life steadily into their culture, which at the same time never loses its Balinese characteristics.